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# THE SURD IN THEOLOGY

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*For the benefit of those whose memory of their mathematical experience may be somewhat weak, we would say that in mathematics a surd is defined as "an irrational number of quantity, especially an indicated root that cannot be extracted, as  $\sqrt{2}$ ."*

Not the least interesting by-product of the war is the theological. Many expected a great religious "awakening" similar to those of the past. In this they were disappointed. There have been no "revivals" or "reformations" of note, no extraordinary increase in church membership, no wholesale turning away from "the world" to God. It is, however, noteworthy that anti-theistic views are declining and that from the most unexpected quarters we find religion indorsed. But while that is true, there is also a current in the other direction. Multitudes have lost their faith in prayer and Providence, and now consider the universe orphaned. "How can these things be in a God-ruled world," mankind asks in horror as the news of the day is read. The answer is everything from an orthodox interpretation of the Apocalypse to H. G. Wells's "invisible King." With all their diversities and contradictions, these answers agree on one point: There is a logical surd in our accepted theological doctrine of God; and this surd must imperatively be denied, explained, or explained away.

## I

For our religious system is not consistent with itself. To locate the surd

let us state the fundamentals. Christianity is the religion of the Heavenly Father seeking his lost children by sending them their Divine Brother to save them by conquering sin and death and leading them into the Kingdom of God. This religion must have a logical basis. It must connect with the rest of life so as to make the universe a consistent and believable whole. The Heavenly Father must fit into nature and history, and above all into life, both the daily, pragmatic variety as well as our ideal thought-life. This logical basis theology tries to furnish.

Theology holds that the universe is a glorified Persian empire over which an omniscient and omnipotent Xerxes holds sway. Down to the minutest details every event that has happened or that shall happen is known and controlled from eternity by this despot of the universe. As he is omnipotent, nothing can happen without his consent. To use another figure, God is the perfect watchmaker and the universe is his watch. The proximate corollary is that the Perfect Watchmaker has a perfect watch, the divine King has as his Kingdom a flawless world. This basis of theology we shall here call *deism*, as it is the fundamental proposition of

the "religion" of the eighteenth-century deists. Theology, then, offers us deism as the basis of Christianity. Upon deism rest the frowning battlements and soaring spires of the dogmatic fortress-cathedral of orthodoxy as well as the confessedly temporary improvised camp of the modern liberal.

The astounding truth is that far from being a safe basis for Christianity it makes Christianity and every other religion worthy of the name impossible.

Orthodoxy teaches that sin is the cause of all suffering. Suffering is either punishment or chastisement, one to the unconverted, the other to the children of God. Unadulterated orthodoxy is not appalled by the consequences of being consistent. Of the thousands who have gone to their death over innumerable roads of agony in this war, orthodoxy says, "They deserved it. Every one of them deserved every bit of it, and if he died unconverted, his sufferings here are as nothing to what he shall suffer in all eternity." But even this tremendous sacrifice to consistency does not save orthodoxy from the surd. For if God really desires every sinner to repent, he cannot have created any person whom he foresaw would not repent and be saved. Unmodified orthodoxy is, however, rare today. In historical novels laid in mediaeval times, a favorite feature is the secret passage by which the hero escapes from the beleaguered castle to freedom beyond wall and moat. But the ingenuity employed in constructing these secret passages is as nothing compared with the acumen displayed by most moderns rated as orthodox in escaping from the disagreeable or untenable portions

of their creed without losing title to their orthodoxy. For those who either frankly or by secret passage have abandoned orthodoxy as a system, the modern theological defense of God and explanation of evil is some form of the divine-schoolmaster theory. "This life is a school. Sorrow and suffering are disciplinary measures driving us to Christ. Through trials and tribulations the soul is purified and tempered for the higher life. Only by overcoming temptation can character grow." That this is all true, no one with spiritual insight will deny. But to make it the universal explanation of evil is impossible. We must then hold that the innocent and ignorant girl, lured to a life of shame, is in truth being educated by divine Providence in the very best way to attain the highest spirituality. When parents anxiously safeguard their children from evil influences, this shows reprehensible lack of faith in the Heavenly Father, for how possibly could a temptation too severe to be overcome assail any pupil in the divine Teacher's school? Both orthodoxy and modern theology meet a more fundamental conflict. As God is omniscient and omnipotent, his creation must be perfect to all eternity in every detail. Everything, including suffering and sin, must be good *in itself*, for a perfect Creator will not admit any imperfection into his creation. The agony of France, the martyrdom of Belgium, the drowning of each child on the Lusitania must have been perfect and lovely and just in the eyes of God, not merely as a means to an end but in and of themselves. It offers no solution to say that in order to develop human character

these and all other tragedies were necessary, for, *ex hypothesi*, nothing is necessary to God. He can achieve any result he pleases by any means he chooses or without any means at all, as he has made the conditions and established the attributes and limitations of everything. Therefore, if we accept deism, we are driven to the conclusion that today and every day God says as he looks out on his creation, "Behold, it is all very good." We must come to Pope's conclusion: "Whatever is, is right."

Deism makes prayer ridiculous. Suppose the passengers on a steamer should at times approach the bridge and address the captain thus: "O, Captain, we know thou art a perfect sailor and that thy vessel is unsinkable. For this we laud thy name. We know that from the beginning of the trip thou hast planned everything even unto the end thereof, and that nothing will happen to mar thy plan in the least particular. We beseech thee not to let the ship hit an iceberg or fall into any danger. Keep the stewards and thy other servants faithful and efficient. As we retire tonight we commend the ship and all its passengers to thy protection and care." This is no more absurd than is any prayer to a deistic God. As if the omniscient Master of the universe would do anything less than the best, whether we pray or not!

The Christian God is a suffering, working, battling, conquering God. The God of deism is omnipotent and omniscient, and for that very reason he cannot suffer, work, battle, or triumph. As he can gain any end he wants without disagreeable means, he cannot suffer.

There is no work for the watchmaker in keeping a perfect watch running. It may be interposed that God is the constant source of energy without whom the universe would collapse in an instant. But this scarcely better the situation. This reduces God to the hand-organ man who now constantly turns the crank of the universe, grinding out music that he composed before the eternities began. "Laboring in the vineyard of the Lord" becomes an illusion, for the Lord's vineyard is perfect every day whether we labor or not. Whether we are lazy or industrious, the Lord's vineyard will produce the grapes of perfection. The heathen cannot suffer from Christian neglect of missions, for God will not allow the heathens to sit in darkness one minute longer than they deserve. God cannot battle, for no one can fight against him. The Lord's adversary can do only what the Lord permits him to do. How dare we risk the blasphemy of assuming that God has staged a sham battle between himself and Satan? As nothing in all eternity can oppose the Absolute, he has nothing to conquer. "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done," the Christian prays to his Heavenly Father. But the deistic God's kingdom cannot come, for it has always been here: and why pray that his will be done, when never in all eternity could anything else possibly be done than God's will? The objection that sin is a necessary result of there being morally free creatures is a fallacy. On the deistic theory God could have seen to it that no morally free creature had been created who was to choose to do wrong; but only those who, he foresaw, would choose the right. Hence

deism demands that we believe that the hellish things that have happened in Poland, Belgium, Servia, and Armenia are not necessary evils which happened because even God could not prevent them, but every atrocity and horror is the very best thing that possibly could happen, not only for the world at large, but for every last individual involved, murdered children and ravished women included.

One of the most beautiful and common of Christian similes is that of the lost sheep. The good shepherd leaves the ninety and nine in the fold and braves the night and the storm to save the erring sheep from the wolf. When he finds his sheep he puts it tenderly on his shoulders and carries it back to the fold. But how absolutely meaningless or worse this becomes when we try to identify the Good Shepherd with the deistic God! The deistic Good Shepherd knows every minute where the sheep is and could save it by less than a nod. The wolf cannot harm the sheep without the Good Shepherd's permission. The Good Shepherd knew before the sheep was born whether, when, and where the sheep was to err. If he had not wanted a lost sheep in his world, he would not have let it be born.

The deistic and Christian world-conceptions are everywhere irreconcilable except as to their central conception. This is identical. Both hold that the highest, mightiest, oldest, and noblest in the universe is a great Intelligent Will. With this in common, they suffered little from the surd; for logic is, after all, only a late and adventitious attribute of man. The great multitude

never rose to a clear conception of the deistic world-view. "God Almighty" meant to the masses simply that God was stronger than any other power. Thus in the popular mind Satan was a close second to God in power and wisdom. The few enlightened souls who saw the surd made their escape along different routes. In most the reasoning faculty could be easily deceived by a little camouflage. Those who were too clear-eyed for that were either cowed into silence by, "How dare man question the goodness and justice of his Maker!" or they assumed that the Divine Being had one standard of right and wrong for his creatures and another and a wholly contradictory one for himself, or they decided that the whole question transcends the range of the human intellect and let it go at that.

## II

In everything but religion deism today is dead. We do not ordinarily think of the events of nature and history as predetermined and foreknown by a divine Despot of the universe, but most of us habitually think of them as the results of causes not directed by consciousness. Why God created the mosquito does not trouble the modern scientist, for he never attributes purpose to nature. In the place of deism we have placed another world-view. Its fundamental proposition is that time and space, matter and energy were first; and then later consciousness (as thought, feeling, instinct, and desire) was "evolved." Thinking is a function of the brain, and character a product of the nervous system. The universe is the product of matter and mechanical

energy, and what seems like design and thought is the accidental result of natural selection by the survival of the fittest. This might properly be called atheism or materialism, but its devotees object strenuously to these designations. We shall here coin the term "scientism" for this world-view. In such a world-conception there is no place either for the Heavenly Father of the Christian or the divine Despot of the deist. But men are loth to lose their souls; and to save them miracles of metaphysical solderings-together of theology and science have been performed; but to no avail. Subconsciously if not consciously man knew that he could not believe both in God and in the scientific Mammon, and as the scientific creed seemed indubitable, both Christianity and deism became "emeritae" religions, relieved from active service but pensioned off for past usefulness. This, by and large, is the situation today in the religious world. Ordinarily we are materialists, looking upon the world as a "fortuitous collocation of atoms," as a welter of energies without feeling, will, or intelligence. Often we quite irrationally give way to our heart's yearning and believe in a Heavenly Father and try to justify this faith by some sort of a creed. The only creeds in stock in Christendom, if not in the world, are deistic. But we find to our horror that our creeds, twist and turn them as we may, will not fit any faith worth having and that neither faith nor creed can long stand the "scientific air" of the day. Oh, yes, we may divide our souls into air-tight and water-tight compartments and keep our scientific common sense in one, our Christian faith in

another, and our deistic creed in the third. This is a famous arrangement and much affected by clerk and lay. Modern man lives mostly on scientism. On this he works and watches but, of course, cannot pray. But when he is, as the Psalmist says, "at his wit's end" he still often prays right fervently, as a good Christian. However, if in spite of all, his plans miscarry, his luck fails him, or his friend dies, then he becomes a fatalist and comforts himself with the thought that after all what is going to happen is going to happen, and if his deism is not entirely dead he will add that God has so ordered it and hence it must be for the best. Thus modern man manages to keep his cake and eat it at the same time. Before the event he is either a scientific materialist and wages the battles of life as his own commander-in-chief, or he is a Christian, and while battling no less courageously he owes allegiance in obedience and trust to his Heavenly Father. In either case he fights, for he believes his fighting makes a difference. If he rests on scientism he thinks he stands to win or lose according to his own prowess and sagacity. If a Christian, he believes the event depends on how closely he keeps himself to God. But if the event proves to be a disaster, if he loses the battle, then he straightway becomes a deist. Then it is the providence of God that he should lose, be injured, disgraced, or bereaved. Even if his friend was foully murdered, "it hath pleased God to take unto Himself" the murdered victim just then and there and thus. Hence since God has foreseen and could have prevented this and all other events, sad and glad, it must

have been God's will that it happened just as it did; whence it is plain that all man's battling is in vain.

This situation is far from reassuring. The surd in his thinking is a menace to the higher life of modern man. The insincerity of it all, subconscious though it be, is a subtle poison emaciating all spiritual life.

### III

We have seen that deism is a failure as a basis for religion. How does it measure up as a basis for science? Deism is an interpretation of nature based on social models. It took form in ages when despotism was the political ideal. As every land had its sovereign, so, of course, the universe must have an Almighty King. There must be a Lord of lords and a King of kings. But if we approach nature without prejudice our impression of her is certainly not that of a well-ordered despotism, governed by unerring wisdom and unfailing power, however much that attitude is the fashion in some quarters. Nature is not economical. "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air." Nature is not efficient. Only a very small percentage of animals and plants ever reach maturity. Nature tires of the great majority of beings to whom she gives life, after having spent on them a prodigious amount of energy and ingenuity, and throws them unfinished into the scrap heap, the grave. No factory could keep out of bankruptcy which produced so great a proportion of articles which were failures and "seconds" as nature. Nature works at cross-purposes. Tornadoes and volcanoes, hail and lightning, deluges and

droughts destroy life, its best and its worst indiscriminately. A farmer's cultivator attacks only the weeds. No despot is senseless enough to turn his artillery against his own town. Many a sermon has been preached on the divine wisdom and mercy in sending pain as a warning against danger. The writer thinks that there is indeed divine mercy and wisdom in pain, but not if we interpret the universe as a despotism. For pain comes generally *after* it has become impossible to mend. Not until after he has stubbed his toe does the barefoot boy get warned by pain. To be sure it is a warning against the next carelessness; but how much more efficient were the warning if it occurred before the stubbing. Suppose railroads should instal warning bells that rang just after a train had passed! Most pain could not have been avoided by the individual that suffers it; easily explained, to be sure, but not on the infallible despot theory. Such a despot would not be guilty of installing a system of warnings and punishments that sometimes, not to say generally, hit the wrong person. We may safely conclude that deism, the theory that this world is a despotism ruled over by a divine despot and run according to a program made out by this despot before creation, is not the most plausible interpretation of the universe—yes, that it cannot be maintained without much specious special pleading.

Modern scientism fails as dismally as does deism to furnish a valid basis for a believable interpretation of nature and life. It essays to get along without any cosmic intelligence. What appears as design is explained as lucky accident. Evolution as understood by the materialist

amounts to this, that by very many additions of nothing, something is finally produced. Darwinian evolution is doubtless the correct explanation of the succession of the forms of life. Variations, whether accidental or not, are put up for trial and the best will be adopted by nature. But this touches only a very small portion of the problem of thought and design in nature. The problem is not simply to trace the steps by which the speck of primitive protoplasm developed into an oak, but why protoplasm and oaks grow at all. Who is the architect who marshals the molecules to form the living cell? Why does the cell divide into two cells? Why do acorns grow at all, and why when they grow do they always grow into oaks? Natural selection and survival of the fittest is no answer to these questions, for it was not necessary for anything to survive. Scientism can live only by ignoring these problems. While therefore deism is thoroughly discredited, it is venerable as the result of serious human thought on a certain stage of development. But scientism is the absence of thought and explainable only on the ground that the great majority of mankind get along without any rational consistency in their thinking.

#### IV

If we do not put a forced interpretation on experience, we come to conclusions something like these. The universe is not a despotism, it is a battle. Its keynote is not order and efficiency, but competition. The world-process has no program. The universe is improvised as it goes along. Nature gives evidence of thought; but not of

an external world-plan and a World-Planner, who now is constructing the world according to specifications that he has previously drawn, or who is now reeling off the world-drama as it was of eternity conceived, staged, and filmed. Rather, nature is thinking here and now, solving her difficulties as they come along. To the writer it seems evident that there is a unity in the universe which warrants us in holding that all activities are the expression of one intelligent Urge; but the first and the insistent impression is one of a multiplicity of Intelligences and Wills. Nor is this impression false. We (the thinking wills) are indeed *legio*. That we are also One does not make our plurality any less true. It was a correct instinct which made all early cults polytheistic. Far from being the phonograph record of one Divinity's "canned" thought, nature is full of divinities—living, loving, working, sometimes in harmony, but almost as often in truly Olympic conflict.

There is thought in nature. There is evidence, nay, proof, of higher and clearer as well as dimmer and lower consciousnesses than man's and the animals'. The intelligence that urges and guides the birds of passage is not the intelligence of the individual bird. We have seen that evolution cannot be explained without assuming it to be the work of an intelligent urge or urges; and it is too wise to be but the animals subconsciousness. There is intelligence in nature but there is also the lack of it. Nature is foolish as well as wise. Hence there is failure, want, ugliness, sickness, sorrow, and pain in the world. In spite of its spiritual unity,



nature recognizes no central, all-regulating authority over life. Hence her forces, as we have seen, often work at cross-purposes with one another. Creation is full of strife, competition, combat, internecine war; whence there is hate, crime, sin—evil, in short. This breeds more sorrow and pain. These evils are offset but not explained by the heroism, saintliness, and conquest of self for which they offer a field of exercise.

### V

Such is the world. What believable rational basis can be laid which is consonant with the foregoing view of nature and life and on which religion can live? Materialism is ruled out, likewise deism. James's "Plural Absolute" is an attractive and daring solution—a little too daring, as it happens, for the rational demand for unity in experience cannot be successfully met by that theory. The plural absolute is the metaphysics of polytheism, and polytheism is as untenable as an ultimate interpretation of existence as it is inevitable and unanswerable as a proximate solution. The answer, the writer is convinced, is found in idealism. But this is as vague and insufficient a direction as saying that its post-office address is New York. Plato's *nous*, Hegel's *Begriff*, Bostrom's idea, and Bergson's urge fail to agree; and still there is in all of them a strange and strong unity which, though we may fail to grasp, we cannot escape. The metaphysical jargons of the masters differ so, but the pearl of great price is there. The formulations of idealism which follows is not an ambitious attempt to solve the problem of the ages, but rather a tem-

porary pontoon bridge to serve the present exigency. Nor is any claim to originality made as to its major elements, though the wording of it is largely new. To furnish it with a tag, let us call the view to be outlined "evolutionary idealism."

Let us renounce the sophistry of conventional thought and return to the innocent faith possessed by the little child. Let us cash the issues of the senses at par. All that we know or anyone knows or can know must be in experience. Experience is in consciousness. Hence whatever is, is in consciousness. All the things that I have known are the percepts and ideas of my mind, for I cannot get outside of myself. I believe my senses implicitly. The oak tree over there is just as real as it seems to be. It verily is there, fifty feet from my window, its leaves are green and its bark is gray. Now comes the sophisticated metaphysics of common sense and tells me that the green and the gray as well as all the rest that I see of the oak is a mere perception existing only in my mind. But it adds soothingly that of course there is an unseen tree outside of my consciousness that looks and feels just exactly as the empty percept of the oak does, only this real oak can never by any possibility be perceived by anyone.

Why this self-contradicting explanation when it were so much simpler to believe with the child that we all are conscious of the same oak? Because common sense starts out with the false assumption that our minds are absolutely discrete. Hence belief that all existence is in consciousness would land us in solipsism. All is solved if we

realize the unity of consciousness. There is *one* consciousness and in that we all share. This saves us both from solipsism and the *Ding-an-sich*. "Pantheism!" you sagely nod—or gasp or sneer, according to your philosophical creed. It is. The road to truth lies through pantheism, but we shall not tarry here long. Just long enough to note that matter is in the mind, not mind in matter. Likewise that time and space as well as everything else is in consciousness, and not consciousness in time and space. When the neophyte of idealism first catches sight of the divine unity of existence and the primacy of consciousness he usually assumes that time, space, matter, and individual personality are an illusion if not a sin. The practical result of this heresy is fearful. One is spiritual palsy. India is suffering from that for centuries. The road to truth lies *through* pantheism. We are just as truly many as we are one. Our individuality is just as sacred as our divine universality. This is mere unintelligible gibberish until we recognize that each one of us is not a part of consciousness but a synthesis of all consciousness.

"But does not this put equation marks between all individuals?" By no means. My self and your self, like my world and your world, are constituted of the same soul stuff. But your arrangement and my arrangement of the stuff differ. I put the emphasis on that little corner of the All that I have pre-empted as particularly my own; you have specialized on another region of existence, and both of us slur over all the rest of the infinities and eternities. Mankind is a drawing class, sketching

the same objects and the same background; but each makes a different composition so that each has a different picture.

Man then, in the fundamental sense, is not a part of the world-process; the world-process is a part of him. Hence the "freedom of the will" (a most unfortunate and inept phrase). If the soul were a thing or a force among forces and things, the necessitarian's conclusion were inevitable. He who does not grasp the mind's transcendence of time and space reveals logical immaturity if he holds that moral responsibility is anything but an illusion.

The world-process (history, evolution), then, is consciousness, the world-soul, co-ordinating, realizing, synthesizing itself. This is a struggling, groping process of many syntheses developing in co-operation and conflict. Hence the universe is as much a chaos as a cosmos. Still, he who has faith in God believes the upward tendency to unity and harmony will finally triumph.

## VI

The thesis of this paper is that evolutionary idealism solves the surd in theology.

In one sense we must inevitably identify the universal consciousness-urge and God. Consciousness is the Absolute, for without it there is nothing. But naturally all our old troubles come upon us, for everything, good and evil, wisdom and folly, is done by and comes from the universal Urge. Strict thinking will reveal, however, that we never "meet up" with the universal Urge *as such*. All urges and intelligences

that we can get into relation with are *manifestations* and *syntheses* of the universal consciousness-urge. The question is, have we any satisfactory evidence of such a synthesis (summing up, organic unity), such an Intelligent Will who is good, wise, and strong enough to be called God? We are not looking for a world-ruler, for we have every reason to believe there is none as yet in the world. No, we are looking for a world-conqueror who will lead us to victory and the universe to peace. Is there One now successfully reducing the chaotic All to his cosmic Kingdom? Christianity answers "Yes," and "Yes" answers the voice of Faith which is the voice of sane and soul-healthy humanity. Devout thought has seen the "stately steppings" of a divine will, the cosmic warmth of a divine love, the wisdom of the aeons in a divine Providence, in nature, in human history and in the inner abysses of the human soul. Millions of believers have seen God in one human individual of history, Jesus, the Christ. These convictions, far from being inherently absurd, as they are on the basis of deism and scientism, are eminently consonant with evolutionary idealism.

Also consonant with evolutionary idealism is the Christian doctrine of heaven. There is another and better world in the universe than this world. In that world God is at home. Our Father is in Heaven, where he now rules and where now his will is done. This world contains God, but in a very weak solution, very far from the saturation point. The divine thought that works in nature is a long-distance thought. This world, Christianity teaches, is

a rebellious province not yet reduced to obedience. But God shall finally conquer. Finally every knee shall bow in loving obedience to the Father and his Christ.

A friend to whom I stated these views said, "Let me criticize your views in just two words: *Poor God!* Why call a being God who is only a little more powerful than we?" But evolutionary idealism does have a place for "God the Father *Almighty*." Because the Intelligence-Will which we call God is the *central* and *adequate* synthesis of the consciousness-urge it is certain to conquer. He is almighty in the sense that finally he shall win a complete victory. Hence God can help in all need, if we come to him, but not if we stay outside of his Kingdom. In so far as two persons are alike, they are identical, is the teaching of this philosophy. In prayer we coalesce more fully with the Divine and consequently we are divine in so far as we coalesce. As far as we are in harmony with the divine mind we are within his protecting and guiding light. However, it is a sad possibility, nay a fearful probability, that some of our being may not yet be fully in harmony with the Divine. A hot temper or a rheumatic joint may very well be out of harmony with the Conquering One, though attached to an otherwise pious person. Thus it may happen that even "the saints" may suffer what is not the will of God.

Let it be clearly understood that evolutionary idealism does not deny that sickness, sorrow, and tribulation may often be used by God for education and discipline; but it is contended that it is impossible to explain *all* evil as

educational; and this is not necessary if we base our thinking on evolutionary idealism.

Critics of idealism claim that it is nothing but thought-jugglery; that we play fast and loose with the meaning of terms. Thus we have here said that everything is in God, then that God is in heaven, and finally that this world has only a weak infusion of God. These are of course different metaphors, but their meaning is not inconsistent, as we see when we grasp the fundamental conception. God is the adequate synthesis of consciousness. That means, this synthesis will conquer and reduce into harmony everything, though it has not done so yet. Being a synthesis of consciousness it contains everything, but it is not in the same relation to everything. In this world the divine Synthesis is not yet a harmonious one. But it is all-inclusive. Even ignorance and enmity to God is in the synthesis, though their relation is one of negation and opposition; just as a traitor is a citizen of the country he betrays.

God the Conqueror comes nearer being an adequate conception than God the Despot. The static conception of the despot, when applied to the dynamic world, becomes an absurdity. The Despot of the universe becomes a paralyzed God with nothing to do. But God the Conqueror is a conception which gives even more glorious meaning to the magnificent words of the creed: "God Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth." He is not a retired, pensioned Creator. He is now and here and throughout the infinities and eternities creating heavens and earths.

God the Conqueror is humanized and spiritualized in the Christian conception as God the Redeeming Father. Evolution, God's world-conquest, Christianity interprets as a process of salvation. The Heavenly Father seeks and saves his lost children. For them he is developing out of this sad world which shall pass away, a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells, where there shall be no curse or darkness, for the Lord God is their light and their life. There he shall reign forever and ever.